

THE HAWKSWOOD GROUP

2018-19



Educational Visits Policy

Approved by the Management Committee of
Hawkswood Group

Chair of Management Committee: Mr Mark Morral

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The Hawkswood Group

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Hawkswood Group Educational Visits Policy

Introduction

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every child to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment and so form a key part of what makes the PRU a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits of children taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include (but are not limited to):

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change and novelty
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other)
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Students are active participants not passive consumers and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions giving them the tools and experience necessary to assess their own risks in a range of contexts.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time or outside the normal school day, is covered by this policy.

The Hawkswood Group adopts Waltham Forest's document: **'Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE'** (available via EVOLVE Resources). EVOLVE is the web based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system, used by Waltham Forest LA, to which all staff have access.

Each PRU has a staff member trained to use EVOLVE and this person is responsible for logging all visits correctly.

The Local Authority's guidance links directly with National Guidance www.oeapng.info

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with Waltham Forest's policy. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

The rest of this policy explains how visit approval and planning takes place at within the Hawkswood Group.

Types of visit

There are three types of visit, for each of which the approval process is slightly different:

1. staff using the local area to deliver lessons
2. other single day visits within the UK excluding adventurous activities
3. Any visit involving adventure activities, involving travel abroad and/or an overnight stay

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of visits but should involve both accompanying colleagues and the children in this process. Staff must make appropriate checks of any third party providers. Staff are advised to obtain outline permission for a visit, from the Head Teacher, before beginning to plan and certainly before making any commitments.

Every centre has a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom. They are the first point of call for advice on visit related matters. The EVC will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE.

The Head teacher has responsibility for monitoring and final approval of all visits.

The Governors Governors fulfil their responsibilities in terms of challenging and supporting visits and may be given 'read-only' access to EVOLVE if desired.

Staff Competence

We realise that staff competence is the single most important aspect of safe visit management and so we support staff in developing this competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role
- Supervision by Senior staff of some educational visits
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to the role of visit leader

In deciding whether any member of staff is competent to be a visit leader the head teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Level of relevant experience
- Any relevant training undertaken
- The emotional and leadership ability of any prospective visit leader to make dynamic risk management judgements and take charge of any emergencies that may arise.
- Knowledge of the children, the venue and the activities to be undertaken

Visit Planning and approval

The internal school approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Single day visits within the UK excluding adventure activities – these are put on EVOLVE and approved internally by the Head Teacher. Visits should be submitted to the EVC via EVOLVE at least x days in advance.
2. Visits involving an overnight stay must be put on EVOLVE and submitted to the EVC at least x days in advance. The school is required to submit these for Local Authority Approval at least 10 days in advance.
3. Visits involving adventure activities must be put on EVOLVE and submitted to the EVC at least x days in advance. The school is required to submit these for Local Authority Approval at least 10 days in advance. Visit leaders must check if an activity provider holds either an AALA licence
(http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider_search.php)

and/or an LOTC quality badge (<http://www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk/search>).

If they don't hold the LOTC Quality Badge then they must complete a Provider Questionnaire.

4. Visits Abroad require detailed planning to commence well in advance and the Head must be kept up to date with progress. Checks must be made on any third party providers and permission from the head teacher to use them be obtained before any deposits are paid. Third party providers who hold the LOTC quality badge (see above) do not require further checks. Those who do not hold this accreditation should complete and return a Provider Questionnaire, which visit leaders should scrutinise. (You may want to add in here and /or under 3 above how the governors are informed / consulted. This will depend on how the governors wish to discharge their responsibilities with regards to trips which, in turn, will depend on the legal status of the school. Normally Governors should be informed via a standing item on the GB agenda)
The head will need to submit final plans to the Local Authority at least 10 days before the departure date.

Emergency procedures

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 1). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability; where it involves serious injury or fatality or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

The Visit Leaders job list

The visit leader will ensure all the following steps are completed for any type 2 or 3 visit:

- Gain outline approval from the head to begin planning the visit and agree funding mechanism / charging policy.
- Ensure the visit:
 - has clear learning outcomes
 - has activities appropriate to the group
 - is planned to maximise benefits to the children while managing significant risks
 - is appropriately staffed
 - complies with the school's safeguarding policy
- Involve children in the planning of the visit, and how it will be managed, wherever possible.
- Ensure the LA procedures are followed and that the visit plan is recorded on EVOLVE.
- Ensure all other staff, accompanying adults and children are:
 - fully briefed about their roles and responsibilities during the visit
 - know what to do in the event of an *emergency
 - are given information they need about individual pupil needs.
- Ensure the base contact back at school is fully briefed and has copies of all relevant information.

(*Emergency procedures must include what would happen in the event of illness or injury affecting the party leader).

Parental Consent

The school obtains blanket consent, for all local, non-residential visits, at the start of each year. For any visits not covered by the extended learning territory, information should be sent home giving the parents information on the visit and including a request for information on any changes in their child's medical details.

For residential visits, visits extending beyond the school day or visits out of the Area specific consent should be requested from the executive Headteacher and the Local Authority.

Charging / funding for trips

Where possible, the PRU will fund trips but where voluntary contributions are requested, a trip will only be undertaken if sufficient voluntary contributions allow the school to break even.

Transport

For local visits, the PRU uses the school minibus. The nominated driver is responsible for pre-checks. Pupils are always accompanied by a second adult who has responsibility for monitoring appropriate behaviour. .All visits comply with Local Authority guidance.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils

Any use of private vehicles will be subject to a specific risk assessment (Private Car Use) and in line with Local Authority policy..

Insurance

The Hawkswood Group always ensures that there are appropriate and relevant insurance policies in place.

Appendix 1: Emergency procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager.
3. The visit leadership team and the emergency base contact will both have relevant medical and emergency contact information on all the trip participants (including staff).
4. Both the visit leader(s) and the base contact know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability; involves serious injury or fatality or where it is likely to attract media attention.
5. The National Guidance role specific emergency action cards are carried by:
 - a. The visit leader
 - b. The first point of contact (eg the office receptionist)
 - c. The designated base contact senior manager
6. This procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders

School will attempt where possible to obtain more than 1 emergency contact detail for each pupil.